97-84107-7

Notable addresses at the tenth annual banquet...

[S.l.]

[1908]

97-84107-7
MASTER NEGATIVE #

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
PRESERVATION DIVISION

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

```
  OCLC:  36913629            Rec stat:    n
  Entered:    19970515       Replaced:    19970515      Used:    19970515
⌙ Type:  a     ELvl:  K     Srce:  d     Audn:        Ctrl:       Lang:  eng
  BLvl:  m     Form:  a     Conf:  0     Biog:        MRec:       Ctry:  xx
               Cont:        GPub:        Fict:  0     Indx:  0
  Desc:  a     Ills:        Fest:  0     DtSt:  s     Dates: 1908,     ↔
⌙   1  040     PR1 ▾c PR1 ↔
⌙   2  007     h ▾b d ▾d a ▾e f ▾f a--- ▾g b ▾h a ▾i c ▾j p ↔
⌙   3  007     h ▾b d ▾d a ▾e f ▾f a--- ▾g b ▾h a ▾i a ▾j p ↔
⌙   4  007     h ▾b d ▾d a ▾e f ▾f a--- ▾g b ▾h a ▾i b ▾j p ↔
⌙   5  049     PR1A ↔
⌙   6  245 00  Notable addresses at the tenth annual banquet of the Brooklyn
League ▾h [microform] : ▾b April the sixth, 1908. ↔
⌙   7  260     [S.l. : ▾b s.n., ▾c 1908] ↔
⌙   8  300     38 p. ; ▾c 17 cm. ↔
⌙   9  533     Microfilm. ▾b New York, N.Y. : ▾c Columbia University Libraries,
▾d to be filmed in 1997. ▾e 1 microfilm reel ; 35 mm. ↔
⌙  10  583     Filmed; ▾f NEH Project (FMEST); ▾c 1997 ↔
```

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: *Reproductions may not be made without permission from Columbia University Libraries.*

TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm **REDUCTION RATIO:** 9:1 **IMAGE PLACEMENT:** IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 6/4/97 **INITIALS:** TLM

TRACKING # : 20788

FILMED BY PRESERVATION RESOURCES, BETHLEHEM, PA.

308
Z
B71 57

Notable Addresses

Notable Addresses at the Tenth Annual Banquet
of The Brooklyn League
April the sixth
1908

CONTENTS

GOVERNOR CHARLES E. HUGHES

PRESIDENT EDWIN W. WINTER

MR. GILBERT ELLIOTT

MR. JAMES A. CAMERON

Address of

GOVERNOR CHARLES E. HUGHES.

"IT is an exceedingly great pleasure for me to come to Brooklyn," began the Executive. " I have seen the wonders of the past, now I am anxious to see the further wonders of its future. I lived in Brooklyn many years. It is a home-loving borough, with yet the luxury of metropolitan civilization. We feel at home in Brooklyn. There is something about the environment in Brooklyn that calls for higher ideals, after the fashion of the New England village, partaking the meanwhile of culture wholesome and normal.

"I have looked over the horizon and seen that nothing that is good for Brooklyn is bad for New York. It was well indeed that the citizens in each borough should strive with vigor to secure what they deem necessary for their betterment, all working together to make New York a centre to which we cannot but irresistibly be drawn. Let us strive for the one borough and recognize the needs of the other, so that the great city can be assured.

"I congratulate you and the other citizens of the

State upon the progress that has been made toward securing the abolition of race track gambling.

"It proves the strength of the moral forces of our State. It is a tribute to the general appreciation of the importance of maintaining our Constitution in its integrity. And well may the people be alive to the importance of this issue. It is not a difficult question; it involves no niceties of argument; it is a plain question whether the wealth and the power, the cunning and unscrupulous methods of those who profit by gambling privileges on the race tracks shall override the Constitution of the State.

"There are those who say that public gambling should be regulated and not prohibited. But the Percy-Gray law is not a regulating act. It does not pretend to be. It is not regulation at all. Talk about the advisability of regulation is simply intended to throw dust in the eyes. It has no pertinence to the question now before us. It is simply for the purpose of misleading some good people who have not looked closely into the matter. The Percy-Gray act is simply a trick—a cunning trick devised, not for the purpose of regulating vice, but for the purpose of affording opportunity to make money out of gambling privileges through unjust and hypocritical discriminations.

Percy-Gray Law a Deceitful Statute.

"If the Percy-Gray law purported to be a regulating statute and to permit public gambling under certain conditions, it would be unconstitutional on its face. If any one really desires to inaugurate the policy of regulation of gambling, let him try to secure a constitutional amendment, but let him not try to trick the Constitution and seek to nullify it by deceitful legislation.

"The Percy-Gray act requires every corporation having a race track to post conspicuous notices that poolselling, bookmaking, and any other kind of gambling are prohibited. Is this a regulating statute? Why does the act require that such notices should be published? Simply because the Constitution of the State provides:

" 'Nor shall any lottery or the sale of lottery tickets, poolselling, bookmaking, or any other kind of gambling hereafter be authorized or allowed within this State, and the Legislature shall pass appropriate laws to prevent offenses against any of the provisions of this section.'

"So the Percy-Gray law provides for posting placards at the race-tracks that poolselling and book-

making are prohibited. It goes further. It authorizes the Trustees of the racing corporation to employ special policemen, whose duty it shall be 'to prevent all violations of law with reference to poolselling, bookmaking, and other gambling.'

"And then comes the crowning provision in this deceitful statute—that the only penalty for poolselling and bookmaking at the race tracks, provided that no voucher or token is delivered, shall be the recovery of the amount wagered in a civil action. Thus poolselling and bookmaking at the race tracks are nominally prohibited, while, practically, because of the absence of a proper penalty, they are permitted and encouraged, although poolselling and bookmaking elsewhere are punishable as felonies.

Calls Race Tracks Plague Spots.

"What a farce it is! What a humbug and pretense to talk about the wisdom of a policy of regulation in connection with the Percy-Gray law, and with regard to the enforcement of the plain provision of the Constitution of the State! It was not enlightened policy, but mere avarice that dictated the Percy-Gray bill.

"Whatever they say, it is evident that the racing interests want poolselling and bookmaking at the tracks.

No one has tried to curtail racing privileges or opportunities to race horses. They post their placards that poolselling and bookmaking are prohibited. We want to carry their notice into effect. Why do they object? Is it because they are interested in restricting vice? Is it because they desire to control the evil instincts of our nature by some scheme of regulation? Go to the race tracks and witness the heroic efforts that are made to that end!

"No. They simply want to make money, and they desire to make it at the expense of the manhood of the State, and without regard to the wretchedness and misery that are spread by these plague spots of vicious temptation. It is a question between the suppression of vice and their pocketbooks; it is a question between upholding the Constitution and their pocketbooks, and the poolsellers and bookmakers and those who profit by gambling privileges are for their pocketbooks every time.

"Now and then we hear something said of vested rights. Vested rights? Under what provision of the Constitution or the laws is there any vested right in maintaining gambling privileges? Are we to recognize vested rights in the profits of lawbreaking? Or in apparatus, machinery, and privileges for lawbreaking?

Does the fact that the Legislature has failed to impose an adequate penalty for the commission of an offense create a vested right to continue in committing the offense?

"Occasionally we hear men who live by manoeuvering and chicanery, who prosper by dark contrivances, protest against what they call executive usurpation when they are brought to open battle in fair argument. They are not horrified by deals, by the cunning craft of skilled manipulators. How much they are willing to endure which all honest men deplore, but how keen their resentment when the Executive lays before the people the merits of the cause in which they are interested and the manner in which the fundamental law has been evaded! It has been a fair field of argument. Those interested in maintaining gambling privileges have not wanted their champions. But they have been sadly lacking in weapons for an open contest.

"Splendidly did the lower house of the Legislature declare itself. And most gratifying have been the successes thus far gained in the upper house. The record of the votes has silenced critics and answered those who would cast aspersions upon the honor of the Legislature.

A Time to Try Men's Souls.

"Doubtless every effort is now being made to win success upon the final rally of the opposition. Doubtless this is a time of struggle and of test—a time which tries men's souls! But I believe that unscrupulous importunities must fail. The desperation of the opponents of these measures is shown in their recent effort at a critical moment by cunning misrepresentation to throw into the controversy the respected name of the great dignitary of the Church. Such tactics cannot succeed. The legislator has but to read the Constitution and his oath of office to know his duty. That duty stands clear before all the people of the State, and the efforts to obscure it have come to naught.

"I saw the other day a statement which in substance amounted to this: That if a Republican Governor wanted to see the Constitution enforced it was the business of a Democratic Senator to oppose it. That, I suppose, is called politics. That, I take it, is what passes among some men as astuteness. But the people and hosts of Democrats who favor these bills call it otherwise. And I wish now to express my high respect for those Democratic Senators—one of them your esteemed fellow-citizen—who, although these

measures were recommended by a Republican Governor, could not be cajoled, threatened, or seduced to vote against their duty and their conscience. They deserve to be held in the highest honr by the members of their own party and by the members of all parties, and their splendid independence will not be forgotten by the people.

"Not long ago I read in one of the newspapers an argument, in effect, that these measures were 'unpopular' and that it might be considered proper to vote against them on this ground. It would be a sad thing if in truth it had become unpopular to stand by the Constitution.

"But, on the contrary—and it is a splendid evidence of the wholesomeness of the sentiment in this State—there has not been within my recollection a measure which has so deeply interested the people of the State and which I believe would command in its support such a heavy popular vote as the measure to abolish the discriminations in favor of race-track gambling.

"Here and there a few men of influence, whose interests are antagonistic to this measure, are making contrary appeals. But they know that the people are for these measures irrespective of class. The farmers

are for them, labor is for them, employers are for them, business men generally are for them, fathers and mothers and wives and sisters are for them, the conscience of the State is for them, and the time is not yet come when the conscience of the State can be safely defied. Some pretend to believe that it is inexpedient from a political standpoint to pass these bills. They know better. The highest expediency is to do right, and the party to which I have the honor to belong can never afford to avoid an issue where the right is so plain and the people understand it.

"I have heard nothing in the way of argument against these measures which merits serious consideration in the light of the constitutional provision. Convinced of the fundamental importance of obedience to the mandate of the Constitution, and of doing away with the iniquitous discriminations of the Percy-Gray act, I propose to maintain my position with regard to this reform, and in so doing I am confident that I shall have the continued support of the people of the State."

Address of

EDWIN W. WINTER

President of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company

IT sometimes happens that we are incapacitated for correctly judging a subject by reason of our being in close contact with the situation. We are also liable to be hampered by the influence of current sentiment and too willingly guided to our conclusions by the popular voice whose words by the mere force of repetition from mouth to mouth carry conviction for the moment, though in fact often serving only to befog and obscure the situation. This is especially the case with reference to questions involving the comfort, health or pecuniary interests of a large portion of the community. At such a time the public is likely to be over-credulous or over-suspicious to believe too much or too little. It may indulge in the bestowal of unearned approbation or burden its unhappy victim with undeserved reproaches. In any case it will certainly struggle to resist conclusions which run against the trend of popular wishes and

therefore contrary to the pre-conceived judgment of the public mind.

It is not always pleasant to cross cut the popular idea, but trusting to the liberal spirit in which the Brooklyn League usually pursues its inquiries I venture a brief expression of my views on what may be called the popular idea phase of the local transportation subject, and in this I am speaking as a member of the League, not for other persons nor in behalf of any Corporate interest.

In order to get a correct understanding of the transit situation and fairly estimate its chances of future development, the public mind should first be freed from what appears to me some of its illusions among the most popular and misleading of which at this moment, I should say, are those relating to subway construction and operation. This applies to some extent to the general situation in New York, but especially to the Borough of Brooklyn, in which all here are immediately interested.

The reason for this obsession is not far to seek. Prompted by an admirable spirit of enterprise and courage, the existing Manhattan Subway was constructed and put into operation. It became popular in a day, was a public necessity in a week, and up to this time

has furnished the best example of urban transportation, so far as I know, in the world. Nothing is more natural than that this form of transit service should be desired in other parts of the city and that there should rise more or less confident expectations of its rapid substitution for other and less efficient modes of transportation. The Elevated Railways, the only other form of so-called Rapid Transit, immediately fell into disfavor, and at once came under the ban of almost universal condemnation as a factor of future transit development. With a unanimity born of happy disregard for certain rather important material considerations, the voice of the people sang the death song of elevated construction in Greater New York.

With so favorable an inauguration of underground transit one would expect the ways of this new servant of the people to be illumined for a while at least by the light of a tolerant, even generous public sentiment, but notwithstanding its beneficient gifts of comparative comfort, facility and safety there was one black bone in the subway meal; the prospect of a profitable return to its owners, and so before this horrible suspicion could be either dispelled or confirmed by actual experience, nay, almost before the great plant was ready for operation, the cry of the city *giving*

away the people's birthright to a private corporation was sounded, the law which made the creation of this form of transit possible was amended into an act of very different complexion, and so far as could be, restrictions were sought to be placed on the operating privileges granted by the original Act.

Now mark how quick and deadly have been the effects on subway development of this movement, when coupled with the ascertained results of subway operation. Taking them together, as effectual a barrier has apparently been raised against subway construction by private capital in Manhattan as if the law had forbidden its progressive march as a penal offense. Valuable and most interesting data regarding net results from this form of transportation have been gathered in three years' experience of the operating company in New York, corresponding with but not so bad as those obtained in London during the same period. It has among other things been conclusively shown that only where great density and regularity in movement are tributary to the line can subway operation be made to yield an adequate return on actual investment and pay the cost of maintenance and operation. The President of the Interborough Company states publicly that with all the privileges of open cut and other aids in

construction, the free gift of exit and entrance space on public property, with immunity from taxation, with a line perhaps more favorably situated as to traffic movement than any other in the country, and in respect of its combined advantages probably without the possibility of duplication in the City of New York, with every part of its splendid plant in new and perfect condition, and as yet only a suggestion of the cost of repairs and replacement which will soon appear and add to its earlier operating burdens "the present subway as a system," I quote his words, "does not earn more than six per cent. on the money invested and you can get that and more nowadays by loaning your money on collateral or investing it in gilt edge securities without any of the worries of the subway business."

The subway enthusiast who has much to gain and nothing to lose will scout this statement of Mr. Bryan's as being put out to mislead public sentiment. The innumerable caravan of transportation experts who, inspired by luminous visions of enhanced values, press bravely on the movement of mapping subway construction through farm lands and marshes, will not fail to discern and properly stigmatize the ulterior motive of such a confession.

Nevertheless we cannot avoid this question.

Where are we to go for capital to enter a subway field such as Brooklyn has to offer, even though the present law be modified to the utmost possible extent, or where, assuming that the City could finance the work, would be the justification, on economic grounds, of municipal construction without the certainty of rental and its equipment and operation by private capital when completed.

It is time that Brooklyn should disabuse her mind of delusions if any have been cherished and look the situation squarely in the face from the standpoint of the investor with whom, however you may involve the element of municipal construction, must the answer to this question finally lie.

We hear much about the defacement of streets with elevated structures, the noise of trains, obscurement of light, damage to abutting property and a long train of other objections which confront at this day almost every effort to push that form of transportation to a more efficient stage. These objections from a certain standpoint and to a degree are well grounded. None of us likes the sight of an elevated structure or enjoys seeing the cars pass over the thoroughfares. It would be much better if all these things could be put under ground and the streets left free from these and many other unpleasant features, but if this cannot be

done, shall development of transportation stop? Because the act of furnishing transportation, the most vital of all agencies to the Borough's growth, involves conditions which in the æsthetic sense we do not like, can Brooklyn afford at this stage to deny to its local transit system the absolutely necessary means of exercise and growth? Let me tell you in all candor and in the desire to throw a ray of light into a field where light is apparently needed, *this is precisely what Brooklyn is doing* to the extent that it echoes the unthinking cry of no more elevated structures, and commits itself to the chance of subway construction and operation as its chief dependence for future transit development. I will go further, and say it is my belief as a transportation man, that it is not possible to build a subway anywhere this side of the East River that could on its completion, or for a long time after its completion, be made to return one-half of what would be regarded as a fair rate of interest on its actual cost, plus the expense of maintenance, and operation; indeed it is most doubtful if any of the lines now so urgently demanded could be made to yield the bare cost of the three items of maintenance, operation and taxes on the basis of five cents per passenger and no transfers. The cost of supplying this form of transportation would be more than the public is prepared to pay for it.

What then is the alternative? Without undertaking the discussion in detail of that side of the question, or assuming to imply any purpose or policy on the part of any financial interest or corporation, for, as I have said, I am speaking as an individual student of conditions, I would say that, granting the normal expansion of the surface system, it rests mainly *in the increase of the capacity of present elevated lines, the construction of more elevated lines and in bringing the coming Manhattan Bridge at the earliest possible moment after its completion into such relation with existing lines of transportation as will fit it for the fullest exercise of its functions as a passway between the two Boroughs.* Within the broad lines of this generalization lie many doubtful problems, the solution of which will depend upon the courage and strength of your transit corporations and the extent to which a wise, considerate and broad-minded policy is exercised in dealing with them.

If Brooklyn is to hold her own, and Brooklyn's own if held will be very much of the future greatness of this incomparable city, she must bring herself to see things as they are, not merely as her fancy is inclined to paint them, and however hard it may be, turn away from some of her pet gods, for some of them are false.

The Park System of Brooklyn and other Cities— A Comparison

By GILBERT ELLIOTT

Chairman of the Committee on Parks and Municipal Art of The Brooklyn League

THE exhibit of the congestion of population has directed attention to the evils of overcrowding; also to the necessity of remedying the difficulty where it has occurred, and preventing similar congestion in other sections.

We now realize that the overcrowding in Manhattan is spreading to certain portions of Brooklyn and will soon become acute with the rapid increase of population. Many remedies are proposed, but the most attractive, to my mind, is to increase the number of breathing spots until no one shall live more than half-a-mile from a parkway, park or playground.

Since consolidation (a period of ten years), but little has been done in Brooklyn toward extending the park system, and we have steadily fallen behind in comparison with nearly every other city in the country.

Thirteen years ago when Frank Squier was Park Commissioner and Henry L. Palmer Deputy Commissioner, Kings County bonds were sold and many additions made to the Park system, since which time our citizens have been so busy with transportation and other worries, that they seem to have forgotten the park question, and the city debt in the meanwhile has doubled. Brooklyn has not had her share.

The people of Boston have been most enterprising in providing for the beauty, attractiveness and health of their city. In seven years they organized a Metropolitan Park District, acquired ten thousand additional acres of forest, seashore and riverbank, and seventeen miles of parkways, making fifteen thousand acres now owned.

Our beautiful Prospect Park has five hundred and sixteen acres, but the Blue Hill Reservation of Boston has five thousand acres including the highest point from which the Atlantic Ocean can be seen anywhere between Florida and Maine. That Boston should have fifteen thousand acres and Brooklyn but eleven hundred and sixty-six seems strange.

Coming nearer home, we find that in Essex County, New Jersey, which includes the Oranges and Newark, a commission, at an expense of five million dollars, has acquired thirty-five hundred and sixty-one acres of park lands and commenced an extensive system of

parkways, so that with the tunnel under the Hudson and the natural beauties of Essex County, added to by this generous provision for the future, many more of our most desirable people may be tempted to leave us and reside in New Jersey.

Kansas City, with a population of one hundred and sixty-three thousand in 1900, had about as many people as one or two of our wards; nevertheless, in 1901 it completed a comprehensive system of parks, connecting with boulevards and parkways, and people were quick to seize upon the opportunity to build up the new sections near the green spaces with buildings which were so much more attractive than those of the old city, that it is said to be hard to believe that they are parts of the same town.

The population of Chicago is a little larger than that of Brooklyn, but not satisfied with three times the number of acres of parks and forty-nine miles of boulevards, a special commission has presented plans for a gigantic park system, including eighty-four new parks aggregating thirty-seven thousand acres, with boulevards in all directions, the whole to cost twenty-five million dollars. This will give Chicago thirty times the park area of Brooklyn.

The people of Providence and vicinity have or-

ganized a Metropolitan Park Commission, embracing the neighboring territory, and are laying out a plan which will place all of its residents within easy reach of some place of beauty. Baltimore, not satisfied with 1,477 acres of parks within the city and a large area outside, now plans to completely surround itself with parks and boulevards, including twenty-four small parks and fifty-six miles of parkways, and thousands of acres of larger parks, besides 61 square miles reserved for the preservation of the water supply. Baltimore may be compared in population to our Bedford-Williamsburgh section, which has 36 acres of parks, over 1,000 people to each acre, and no parkways (or the 36 acres of the same portion of Brooklyn may be compared to the new section of Pittsburgh, with 1,000 acres of parks, which is like a different place from old Pittsburgh).

Louisville is constructing a system of 1,350 acres, and may be compared to our Greenpoint section, with its population of 286,886 and its 60 acres.

Cleveland has Parkways as wide as 1,200 feet, and 1,500 acres of Parks although the population is smaller than that of our Bedford-Williamsburgh section, with its 36 acres.

The twin cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis to-

gether have fewer people than our Bedford-Williamsburgh section, and yet have nearly three times as many acres of Parks as the entire Borough of Brooklyn; and with 34 miles of boulevards, some 800 feet wide, and a magnificent array of lakes and rivers, are doing everything possible to attract and hold wealth and culture.

Washington, already beautiful, is pressing onward to greater things. It has 275 green spots less than one acre in extent each, at the intersections of its diagonal Avenues and Streets. In proportion to the population we should have 1,000 green spots in the Borough of Brooklyn.

All of the Boroughs of the City have not been as idle as Brooklyn and Queens. The Bronx has 4,112 acres of Parks to Brooklyn's 1,166 and Manhattan's 1,192, which gives us one acre of Parks for each 66 inhabitants in the Bronx; each 1,165 in Brooklyn; each 1,462 in Manhattan. So that each resident of the Bronx has 18 times the Park area allotted to each resident of Brooklyn.

Again, we find that the percentage of the total area devoted to Parks is 15 7-10% in the Bronx; 2 3-10% in Brooklyn and 10 3-10% in Manhattan.

Prospect Park with 516 acres must be compared with Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx of 1,756 acres;

Bronx Park of 719; Van Cortlandt Park of 1,132, and Centarl Park in Manhattan 843 acres. Central Park cost five million dollars fifty years ago, and is now worth two hundred millions, an increase of 80% per annum, which shows that it pays to buy park land ahead of the development.

Our wide-awake friends of the Bronx have also laid out Moshulu Parkway 600 feet wide; the Bronx & Pelham Parkway 400 feet wide; while the Grand Boulevard and Concourse is now being completed at a width of from 180 to 500 feet.

Returning to Brooklyn we find over Greenpoint way, a section with 286,886 people, or 5,033 to each acre of parks and no parkways or boulevards.

In our Bedford-Williamsburgh section, as I said, the population is 408,533 or 11,348 per acre, no boulevards. In Brownsville, including a portion of East New York, the population was 100,086, and but 6 acres of parks, say 16,681 per acre, or the worst showing in Brooklyn; and land is cheaper there, too.

Canarsie—population 9,232; 230 per acre. The Park Slope, population, 99,715 or 176 per acre, including Prospect Park; and even including Prospect Park we find an average per acre just twice that of the Bronx.

Down in beautiful Flatbush the population of 46,644 gives us 3,887 per acre, not including Prospect Park.

Gravesend and Flatlands—population 22,958; 1,530 per acre; Bay Ridge and New Utrecht, population, 103,075, 568 per acre. Brooklyn Heights, population, 281,839, or 5,751 per acre.

The figures speak for themselves; but what can be done? We will be told that there is no money, but the money must be found. For instance, the Board of Education can always get money, and it should increase the play grounds attached to each school; especially in the newer sections, where land is cheap.

That it will pay from a standpoint of health, pleasure of financial profit to follow the example of other progressive cities, in laying out a liberal system of breathing spaces there can be no doubt, so let us all work together and start the ball rolling.

JAMES A. CAMERON

History of Brooklyn University Idea.

AM here to make a plea and to urge action on a matter of much importance to our good city, and in the main interesting to all who have given it any thought. If anyone expects that I am going to climb up on stilts in order to attain a proper altitude from which to speak on matters relating to a possible Brooklyn University of the near future, he is going to be agreeably disappointed. Neither do I intend to indulge in the sonorous and high flown periods and the unctuous lingo which the pedant and the doctrinaire usually employ when matters of higher education are under discussion. There is no new sound in the words "A Brooklyn University" neither to my ears nor to yours, one or another phase of the subject has probably been discussed in the hearing of every man present. It was, as some of us know, always the dream of Dr. David H. Cochran, during his presidency of the Polytechnic Institute, that a Brooklyn University might become a reality, and as a

witness of his ambitions in this direction, we see how far into the field he pushed forward the institution of which he was for thirty-five years the head. It was evidently assumed by the Park Commissioner for the year 1889 that a Brooklyn University would eventually be established, for he voted to set aside a tract of land for its uses, and to name it University Park, which later, however, became the site of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. Much consideration has been given this project on the part of the Alumni of the Polytechnic Institute, together with friends and sympathizers in other institutions, and it was presumed that the preliminary plans for the establishment of such a university would culminate in practical and definite form under the leadership of a successor to Dr. Cochran, who was welcomed to Brooklyn four years ago at a dinner given in his honor at the Union League Club, attended by friends of higher education. On this occasion Hon. J. Hampden Dougherty, Judge Augustus Van Wyck, Prof. Franklin W. Hooper, Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott and others publicly advocated a Brooklyn University and expressed hopes of its early advent, intimating that the president of the Polytechnic Institute, Dr. Frederick W. Atkinson, then about to be inaugurated, might be relied upon to head this movement.

The idea evidently made a deep impression upon Dr. Atkinson. But what were the practical results of this impressive propoganda? Echo answers back from Limbo, "Less than none." It drowsed, it drooped, it slumbered, that grand motive for inspired action! Citizen Grout, however, controller of the City of New York, projected himself into the field with boundless enthusiasm and energy, giving his unselfish efforts in behalf of this great plan for higher education in Brooklyn. Unfortunately, however, certain features of Mr. Grout's proposed plan calling for a large expense of public money aroused the peevish activity of those querulous old birds, the taxpayers, who piped up in strenuous opposition. Mr. Grout's plan also excited the opposition of several of the collegiate institutions to be affected by his scheme, who feared that their integrity and their autonomy might be seriously threatened by certain features of the proposed university. The result of this twofold opposition was the defeat of Mr. Grout's purpose. The university idea has since that time been dormant as far as any manifest public interest in it, although it has been adhered to by its loyal supporters among the Alumni of the Polytechnic Institute and the interested Alumni in other Brooklyn Colleges.

I feel that the time has come when public interest in this project should be revived and some practical and definite action taken towards its advancement. I believe that a civic forum such as the Brooklyn League is the proper place for the evolution and discussion of such a plan, interested as it is in all that pertains to the welfare of this community of almost one and one-half million souls.

Historic Universities—Their Influence.

It is worth our while to consider for a moment what a university is and what place it has in the scheme of human affairs and what part these great foster mothers of civilization have played in the advancement of the higher life of man. Think for a moment what transformations have been wrought since the first of these humanizing institutions saw the light in Europe, at Salerno nearly twelve hundred years ago! What elements then were at strife, what titanic struggles then split a wrangling world! Pagan, Papal, Saracen powers contended for the prevalence of their doctrines and their creeds and causes. It lived, that pale glow in an age of gloom! It throve, it grew strong, and Bologna caught up its Promethean fire and Salamanca and Paris and Oxford and Cambridge, Florence, Sienna, Heidelberg, Vienna, Glasgow flashed out, all while our country was yet a howling wilderness.

In their character and origin, these great brood houses of high ideals were as varied as the dreams and purposes of man, sometimes, purely altruistic in their main springs, as when a few searchers after truth met together in some sequestered place to ply their investigations. Sometimes they were reared up by edict of a benign prince, sometimes by the fiat of a tyrant whose policies they were expected to serve, and the which they are as often opposed when these policies were at variance with truth and right. Sometimes in furtherance of the teachings of the Church of Rome; whatever their origin, their work was for the good of mankind, they uplifted the thought of man and inspired his highest ideals. Modern civilization owes an incalculable debt to medieval universities; points of light flashing out in the gloom of almost universal ignorance and depravity, enlarging the understanding, widening the views, broadening the sympathies and affinities, opening the mind to the reception of pure truth unencumbered by dogma.

These venerable monuments to truth and the love of truth were reared and preserved by what is noblest in human nature. Their existence is perennial, eternal

it would seem, for governments may come and dynasties may go, but they go on forever.

Brooklyn as a Center of Culture.

In our own country what a glorious heritage we have in the ideals and achievements of these medieval universities as reflected in our great centers of learning —what names are like the names of our great universities to awaken patriotic pride.

It is astonishing that in Brooklyn we have remained aloof from this almost universal impulse and tendency to build up a university as an intellectual, artistic and technical center. Here where we are so prone to cherish every worthy thing that makes for clean living and high thinking to shield the home from malign influence of all kinds; here where there is so high a moral and intellectual tone, where secondary and collegiate schools have reached their fullest development, a community in which a Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences could grow up to such unexampled strength and virility, we have stopped just short of the university, which might well be one of the greatest and most influential in our country. Stranger still when we realize that the material out of which such a university could be organized is already at hand, and that this organization could be effected and a university created practically without any money expense, possibly with economy, each of the now independent institutions continuing to use its present buildings and equipment. Out of this material there could instantly be called into being a living university with all its manifold forms of life. Six or seven institutions exist here side by side comprising separately a faculty of medicine, a faculty of pure and applied science, a faculty of letters, a faculty of law, a faculty of pharmacy, all the elements indeed of the university of Paris with the exception of Theology. By uniting their several resources and accumulated power these separate colleges would instantly comprise, over night as it were, a university which would rival in dignity and in potency for good, and in the advancement of the cause of truth, and elegant learning and scientific efficiency, any of the greater institutions of the country.

Where was there ever a community in which a really great university could better have its being? Where there is the same high moral and intellectual environment, and the same propinquity to the very stream of the nation's multitudinous and varied life, in all its economical, ethical and artistic interests as re-

flected in the great metropolitan district, and it is in the "Stream of Life" as Goethe says, that character is formed.

Coalition of Brooklyn Colleges Proposed.

Are we to sit in apathy waiting for some rare intervention of Providence to bring about this much desired coalition into one great, strong institution of higher learning? Or have we in our minds a dim and only half formed expectation that some imperious captain of wealth will order by a stroke of the pen a university to be ready made for us and cause us to grow to fit his ideas and the policy he may dictate for it, or are we made of something like the same sort of stuff that men were made of when the great universities of the past were reared up and maintained against the Devil and all the hosts of Hell on the one side and the jealous dogma of Holy Church on the other, with the suspicions and opposition of low-browed sovereigns in between.

It would seem to me incredible that the several Brooklyn institutions now separately comprising all the faculties that in combination would constitute a university as broad in scope as any existing, should forever

persist in keeping aloof from each other when the advantages both to each individually, and the advantage mutually is so much beyond question. By concerted action, each would gain in dignity and importance and efficiency, by association with the whole. Duplication of courses would be obviated, economy of administration effected. A broad, sane policy of co-operation and definite ideal of purpose could thus be evolved.

With respect to collegiate and post graduate education there would be the same purposeful policy as is achieved by the central board of public education in administering the affairs of the high schools and the grammar and the primary schools. In other words, there would be a broad and articulate plan which could better meet the needs of higher education in our city than can be accomplished by each institution acting independently. However efficient this independent action may be; however faithfully they may reflect the ideals of their special supporters and adherents and alumni, each institution owes a first debt to the general welfare, in awakening the pride and spirit of good citizenship, and in compelling the respect and esteem of other cities. I feel that a Brooklyn university would be an inspiration and a guiding force of prevailing worth aside from its educational advantages.

Appeal to League to Co-operate in Founding a Brooklyn University.

It is for us members of this great civic body to bestir ourselves to realize this boon by proceeding to solicit and conciliate and persuade these great educational institutions now laboring so nobly in their separate spheres to unite their vast strength into one mighty institution. And we must be mindful in this undertaking, of their sensitive pride and the jealous loyalty of their adherents, lest like Achilles they sulk in their tents and the cause be imperilled.

Let us therefore hew out a plan in the rough and solicit its discussion and amendment by the institutions interested, to the end that a practicable scheme of organization may be effected as early as possible, and a university pass from the realm of dreams into a life of usefulness and lasting benefit to our good city.

And to this end, I respectfully request Mr. Chairman, that you appoint a committee to give this undertaking the support it merits from this public spirited organization.

MSH 20788

END OF
TITLE